

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00 COME-00
EB-08 EA-10 FRB-03 INR-10 NEA-10 NSAE-00 ICA-11
OPIC-03 SP-02 TRSE-00 LAB-04 SIL-01 AGRE-00
OMB-01 SS-15 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 L-03 NSC-05
PA-01 HA-05 /130 W
-----125496 202156Z /75

R 201624Z JUL 78
FM AMEMBASSY ROME
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4273
INFO AMEMBASSY ATHENS
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMCONSUL FLORENCE
USMISSION GENEVA
AMCONSUL GENOA
AMEMBASSY HELSINKI
AMCONSUL LENINGRAD
AMEMBASSY LISBON
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MADRID
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMCONSUL NAPLES
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMCONSUL PALERMO
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
AMEMBASSY VIENNA

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E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: ELAB IT PINT
SUBJECT: ITALIAN TRADE UNIONS PROTEST SOVIET TRIALS

REF: (A) ROME 12742, (B) ROME 12740, (C) ROME 12975, (D) ROME 13105

BEGIN SUMMARY. THE ITALIAN PROVISIONAL TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION CCU AS WELL AS ITS COMPONENT TRADITIONAL NATIONAL CONFEDERATIONS CISL CGIL AND UIL AND SOME INDUSTRIAL TYPE UNIONS HAVE PROTESTED THE SOVIET DISSIDENT TRIALS. OF THE THREE CONFEDERATIONS THE UIL (PRO-SOCIALIST, SOCIAL DEMOCRAT, REPUBLICAN)) ISSUED THE SHARPEST CONDEMNATION AND THREATENED TO BREAK RELATIONS WITH SOVIET LABOR ORGANIZATIONS. LATER UIL PRESSURED COMMUNIST CGIL LEADER LUCIANA LAMA INTO SUSPENDING A TRIP TO MOSCOW UNTIL THE SOVIET AUCCTU ANSWERS THE ITALIAN REQUEST FOR THE AUCCTU TO INTERVENE ON BEHALF OF THE SOVIET DISSIDENTS. END SUMMARY.

1. THE CCU EXPRESSED "PROFOUND CONCERN" AND FIRM PROTEST OF ITALIAN WORKERS OF THE TRIALS OF SHCHARANSKY, GINZBURG AND ORLOV. CRITICIZING THE "REPRESSION OF DISSENT", THE CCU CONDEMNED REPRESSIVE MEASURES AIMING TO RESTRICT FREEDOM OF OPINION AND HUMAN RIGHTS. IN CONCLUSION THE CCU STATEMENT COMMENTED THE CONTINUED USSR VIOLATION OF RIGHTS SANCTIFIED IN THE FINAL HELSINKI ACT HARMS DETENTE ALREADY IN A FRAGILE STATE.

2. THE COMMUNIST-DOMINATED CGIL PUBLISHED THE TEXT OF LUCIANA LAMA'S LETTER TO THE SOVIET LABOR ORGANIZATION AUCCTU REQUESTING SOVIET LABOR LEADERS TO TAKE PROMPT ACTION TO GUARANTEE THAT THE PRINCIPLES OF FREEDOM AND HUMAN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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RIGHTS PREFAIL DURING THESE TRIALS. LAMA'S LETTER CONCLUDED THAT THE LABOR MOVEMENT MUST NOT BE A PASSIVE WITNESS TO THE VIOLATION OF THESE RIGHTS. COMMENT: LAMA'S LINE FOLLOWS RECENT PCI STATEMENTS BUT SEVERAL LABOR SOURCES CLAIM THAT THIS LETTER DID NOT CHANGE HIS PLANS TO VISIT MOSCOW SOON UNTIL HE WAS FORCED BY UIL LEADER GIORGIO BENVENUTO TO POSTPONE THE VISIT AT A CCU MEETING YESTERDAY. END COMMENT.

3. IN CONTRAST THE UIL STATE NOT ONLY CONDEMNED THE TRIALS BUT PROPOSED COUNTER MEASURES AGAINST RELATIONS WITH SOVIET LABOR ORGANIZATIONS. FACED WITH SUCH A FRONTAL ATTACK ON DEMOCRATIC FREEDOM, IT IS THE DUTY OF EACH DEMOCRATIC ORGANIZATION TO DO WHAT IT CAN TO PREVENT THE OPPRESSION OF HUMAN RIGHTS, UIL SAID. THE UIL PROPOSED THAT THE CCU MEET WITH SOVIET LABOR ORGANIZATIONS AND IF NO REMEDIES RESULT, THE UIL BELIEVES THAT THE CCU WILL HAVE TO DRAW THE INEVITABLE CONSEQUENCE OF BREAKING ANY BILATERAL RELATIONS. COMMENT: NEW UIL SECRETARY GENERAL BENVENUTO, WHO IS CLOSE TO NEW ITALIAN SOCIALIST PARTY (PSI) LEADER CRAXI, APPEARS TO BE STEPPING UP A SHARPER ANTI-COMMUNIST POSITION AND REINFORCING THE TRADITIONAL/ANTI-COMMUNIST VIEWS OF THE SOCIAL

DEMOCRATIC AND REPUBLICAN FACTIONS IN THIS LABOR CONFEDERATION.

4. THE ISSUE WAS JOINED AT A CCU MEETING ON JULY 18 WHEN THE CCU REACTION TO THE SOVIET TRIALS CAUSED A HOT DEBATE BETWEEN LAMA AND BENVENUTO. OUR LABOR SOURCES SAY THAT LAMA TRIED TO FINESSE THE ISSUE BY ACCEPTING BENVENUTO'S PROPOSAL TO SEND A CCU DELEGATION TO THE SOVIET UNION TO MEET WITH THE SOVIET LABOR ORGANIZATIONS TO DISCUSS THE DISSIDENT TRIALS. HOWEVER WHEN BENVENUTO INSISTED THAT THE DELEGATION HAVE ACCESS AND MEET ALSO WITH SOVIET DISSIDENTS. LAMA REJECTED THIS CONDITION. INSTEAD THE CCU AGREED SUSPEND TEMPORARILY RELATIONS WITH THE SOVIET AUCCTU UNTIL THE SOVIET LABOR LEADERS CLARIFY THEIR POSITION ON THE TRIALS.

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5. WE HAVE ALSO HEARD THAT THE UIL WILL PROPOSE TO THE CGIL (COMMUNIST-DOMINATED) AND CISL (DC-ORIENTED) THAT A MASS MEDONSTRATION AND COLLECTION OF MONEY BE ORGANIZED TO SUPPORT THE CAUSE OF THE SOVIET DISSIDENTS AND WILL GO IT ALONE IF CISL AND CGIL DONT AGREE. ANOTHER BACKGROUND FACTOR FOR THIS NEW ATTITUDE OF UIL APPEARS TO BE THE STRONG DESIRE OF BENVENUTO AND OTHER UIL LEADERS TO IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH THE AFL-CIO. END COMMENT.

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6. THE CISL'S MINORITY FACTION AND SECRETARY
GENERAL OF ITS LARGEST AFFILIATE THE FISBA AGRICULTURAL
WORKER UNION, ISSUED A SEPARATE SHARP CONDEMNATION OF THE
SOVIET TRIALS. HE CALLED FOR ITALIAN GOVERNMENT AND
POLITICAL PARTIES TO EXERT ENOUGH PRESSURE TO INSURE
PROPER OBSERVANCE OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE USSR AND FOR
"ALL WORKERS TO TAKE APPROPRIATE INITIATIVES."

7. COMMENT: DURING THE PERIOD BEFORE AND AFTER THE
HELSINKI CONFERENCE, THE SOVIET AUCCTU WAS REMARKABLY
SUCCESSFUL IN SILENCING WEST EUROPEAN TRADE UNION
PROTESTS AGAINST THE VIOLATION OF HUMAN AND LABOR
RIGHTS IN EASTERN EUROPE BY PROMOTING EAST-WEST LABOR
EXCHANGE AND BY SECURING AGREEMENT OF PARTICIPATING
WEST EUROPEAN UNION DELEGATIONS THAT SUCH EXCHANGES
WOULD BE BASED ON "PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE" AND NON-
INTERVENTION IN INTERNAL AFFAIRS. EFFECTIVELY SIGNING
COMMUNIQUE WITH THESE PROVISIONS MEANT SILENCING ANY
ADVERSE OFFICIAL COMMENT BY PARTICIPATING WEST EUROPEAN
TRADE UNIONS ON LABOR AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE USSR.
WHETHER THESE SOVIET TRIALS AND THE ITALIAN LABOR
REACTION (EVEN OF COMMUNIST UNIONS) MARK A LONGER-RANGE
CHANGE IN THIS ATTITUDE OR SIMPLY A REACTION TO THESE

RECENT SOVIET TRIALS EMAINS UNCLEAR. GARDNER

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